

had moved to northeastern Montana many years ago.

Mary Nielsen was one of those unique persons, living in a very remote end of this country, the northeastern corner of Montana, isolated and 150 miles from the nearest major airport—which is not really major. And for those of us who enjoy pasta—affordable pasta, that is, nowadays—the main crop in that part of the world is durum wheat.

She served in a group called WIFE, Women Involved In Farm Economics. She took those responsibilities very seriously and, of course, with great purpose. She became a valuable resource to me and my staff on transportation issues.

When I first met her, I was a farm broadcaster. My programs were aired on the radio station in Plentywood, MT. This was at a time when the big railroads were in the business of abandonments, wanting to close the spur lines that were not very profitable to the big railroads. And that was the case on the Opheim spur up in that part of the country that was originally a part of the Great Northern Railway. We fought hard on that issue because we did not want to see that line abandoned, because up there rail transportation is very important in moving our crops to market.

So she took it on. It was one of those unselfish things people do, leaders do. And you find out that in these small places, in some of these remote places, we have great minds and great leadership.

She and others formed an organization called ABLE, the Association for Branch Line Equity, which became a model in this country for opposing abandonments of railway lines in agricultural country.

She was also a shining star in the political arena. She was passionate and articulate. In fact, she received international recognition when she was elected to the office of Sheridan County Assessor. She ran on a campaign slogan of "If elected, I will resign" in an effort to save taxpayers the cost of paying for a county officer after the office was left on the ballot even though all duties had been absorbed by the State of Montana. She was elected and she resigned, and the office went with her.

Mary was a great vocal advocate for agriculture. That is what she will be remembered as. She was politically informed and active. She was a mentor to all who knew her. She was one of those rare people who, as an activist, fought with grace and dignity for what she really believed in.

It is with great sadness that we see her slip into history. Our prayers go out to her and her husband Ove and, of course, their family. She was a great lady, with grace, who represented a great, great industry.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

NOMINATIONS

NOMINATION OF SPENCER ABRAHAM

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I'm very pleased to have strongly supported the nomination of Senator Spencer Abraham as Secretary of the Department of Energy.

As all my colleagues are well aware, Senator Abraham has a distinguished record of leadership here in the Senate. He has demonstrated his initiative and willingness to pursue complex issues on countless occasions during his years of service in this body.

Senator Abraham and I served together on the Senate Budget Committee, and I came to appreciate his insightful approach to the challenging tasks we faced in crafting the nation's budget. Through his work on the Budget Committee, Senator Abraham deserves a share of the credit for the wonderful progress towards balancing the federal budgets.

From his public service in the State of Michigan, Senator Abraham has an in-depth understanding of the issues facing manufacturers and consumers, including their dependence on reliable, clean energy sources. He appreciates the immense role of the transportation sector in influencing significant parts of our energy policy. He has been one of the Senate's most knowledgeable members on subjects related to high-technology policies and the contributions that this important sector makes to America's economy and global success.

While Senator Abraham has expressed concerns about the role of the Department of Energy in the past, I'm pleased to note that he carefully addressed his current views in his statement to the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. In that statement, he emphasized his support for the many important missions that comprise the portfolio of the Department of Energy.

Service as the nation's Secretary of the Department of Energy is a challenge for any individual. The Department has a diverse set of missions, that sometimes seem to lack a coordinating thread. Management of this Department is truly a daunting assignment.

National security and energy policy will present some of his largest challenges. In the national security area, he and Undersecretary John Gordon, Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration are responsible for all aspects of our nuclear stockpile and a wide range of non-proliferation programs. These two dimensions represent the two different major approaches to improved national security, minimizing threats that could jeopardize our peace and prosperity and insuring our ability to protect ourselves if necessary.

Among many important areas, the NNSA must strive to rebuild morale at the weapons laboratories, develop a

major infrastructure improvement initiative across the weapons complex, and address serious congressional concerns associated with faulty program management that has led in the recent past to large construction overruns such as the experience on the National Ignition Facility. In the non-proliferation area, transparency and accountability will remain serious issues as Congress evaluates the advisability of future funding for these vital programs.

A comprehensive energy policy is urgently needed, although recovery from our current energy crisis will be anything but overnight. First we need the policy, then we need years of careful support to implement that policy—only then can we approach a greater degree of energy security than we face today. As I've outlined now on several occasions, I urge the President to create a multi-Agency approach to national energy policy, so that several key agencies evaluate their decisions in light of assuring our nation of energy security.

And finally, the Secretary is responsible for a large fraction of the federal support for science and technology. The nation's scientific and engineering talents, and the high technology advances they've generated, are responsible for a large fraction of our economic strength. In recent years, Congress has started to increase funding in key areas of science and technology. The Secretary of the Department of Energy must organize his scientific programs to maximize their outputs and their contributions to our scientific understanding and economic security.

His past experiences have prepared him very well for these fresh challenges. I look forward to working with Senator Spencer Abraham in this new role as Secretary of the Department of Energy and encourage all of my colleagues to do likewise.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am pleased to have supported the nomination of Spencer Abraham to be Secretary of Energy.

As Secretary, Senator Abraham will face a number of important and difficult challenges. Clearly, we must address our dependence on foreign sources of energy and the current spike in fuel prices that is driving transportation and heating costs to unacceptably high levels. In my state of North Dakota, home heating costs are painfully high for many families. And this spring farmers will face high input costs as they head into their fields. I do not think developing a comprehensive and effective long-term answer will be easy, but the strength of our economy will depend, in part, on our success in controlling energy price hikes.

In addition, our most populous state, California, is in the middle of an electricity crisis. Again, this has potential

implications for our economy. Finally, the security problems at our national labs will present a difficult challenge for our next Secretary of Energy.

Senator Abraham has been a capable and dedicated colleague for the past six years. As he noted in his confirmation hearing, his views have evolved since he was first elected to this body. Then, he called for the abolition of the Department of Energy. Now he looks forward to service as our next Secretary of Energy. As one who believes the Energy Department plays a critical role in setting policies that profoundly impact our economy and our national security, I welcome this change of heart and wish him well as he enters into this next chapter in his service to our Nation.

NOMINATION OF DR. ROD PAIGE

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of Dr. Rod Paige, Secretary of Education.

President George W. Bush has repeatedly emphasized the importance of education being a linchpin of America's future. Moreover, he has linked increased spending on education with real accountability that actually produces results.

I think Ben Franklin may have put it best when he said, "An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest." I believe this because even on its best day the Federal government can never be a replacement for local administrators, educators, and parents.

It is with this in mind that I am so pleased the nomination of Dr. Rod Paige is before us to be the next Secretary of Education. Dr. Paige is not a Washington bureaucrat, rather he is an accomplished educator and administrator who has actually served in the education trenches.

Dr. Paige's recent tenure as the Superintendent of the Houston Independent School District provides him with the unique perspective of what is actually involved in running a local school district. Unfortunately, that is all too often not the case because Washington bureaucrats make the decisions affecting our students instead of local administrators.

However, I would submit the practice of implementing a Washington based one size fits all approach is about to come to an end.

As a former Superintendent, Dr. Paige, actually understands that every school district does not face the same set of problems and Washington does not know what is best. Rather it is the local parents, teachers, and administrators who know what the problems are as well as the solutions.

I think it also interesting to note the breadth of Dr. Paige's experience in the field of education. Not only was he a school superintendent, but prior to assuming that role he served as a member and then later the president of the Houston School Board.

Lest we forget the importance of higher education, Dr. Paige has also spent time as an administrator and teacher at Utica Junior College, Jackson State, and Texas Southern University. In fact, Dr. Paige served as the dean of the College of Education at Texas Southern prior to serving on the Houston School Board.

I would also like to touch upon one final aspect of Dr. Paige's career and that is his time as a football coach. While the head football coach at Utica Junior College and Jackson State he was still a teacher of students, but instead of desks and a chalkboard he used the gridiron as his classroom.

In closing, I think we all begin the 107th Congress with unlimited opportunities to improve our nation's educational system and among those opportunities is the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

I think there is a lot of agreement on the need for education reform conditioned upon accountability and I look forward to working with Secretary Paige to achieve those goals.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am pleased to have supported the nomination of Dr. Roderick Paige to be Secretary of Education. I believe that his commitment to the improvement of public schools and his diverse education experience will bring him success in this challenging and rewarding position. I am looking forward to working with him to address the critical issues associated with our nation's educational system.

I am encouraged by Dr. Paige's accomplishments in Houston. The Houston Independent School District has seen dramatic changes under the leadership of Dr. Paige, including a decrease in the dropout rate and an increase in test scores. He has worked hard to foster partnerships between public schools and businesses and to encourage community involvement. Dr. Paige's seven year tenure as superintendent has shown him to be capable, creative, and committed to his students.

As we enter a new Administration, it is important that we make the greatest effort to secure our public schools by providing them with the support they need. Whether it be through school modernization and class size reduction programs, or through increased financial aid for higher education, it is critical that we recognize the role of affordable, high quality public education for our children.

Dr. Paige said, "I think the public is where we need to begin our work. This is a public system, it is for the public's benefit, it is a public good, and the public must bring itself together and work hard to achieve it." I agree with him and believe that through hard work together, we will be able to achieve many good things for our schools, our children, and our Nation.

NOMINATION OF DONALD RUMSFELD

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, as was apparent to all who attended Mr. Rumsfeld's confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, our new President has made a good choice for Secretary of Defense, one of the nations most important offices. Mr. Rumsfeld held this senior position during the Ford administration, a time when some Members of Congress were just getting their start in public service. Decades of experience, respect from both sides of the aisle, thoughtfulness, and a strong commitment to this nation make Donald Rumsfeld well qualified to again serve as Secretary of Defense.

As ranking member of the Budget Committee in this equally divided Senate, I look forward to working closely with Mr. Rumsfeld to craft a defense budget that strengthens our nation's defense and makes sense in the context of our national fiscal priorities. In light of the fact that both the status quo within our armed forces and massive increases in defense spending are untenable, I am interested in talking with the new Secretary about a sustainable defense budget and making policy and procedural changes at the Pentagon that might enable us to retool for the information age and get more for our defense dollar.

As the new administration begins to review our nation's approach to arms control, missile defense, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, I would urge Mr. Rumsfeld to avoid preoccupation with specific numbers and keep efforts focused on a central objective: increasing strategic stability and nuclear safety. Toward that end, I hope the new Defense Secretary will support and expand the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program, broaden shared early warning initiatives, encourage more military-to-military contacts with Russia, address the particular threats associated with Russia's enormous tactical nuclear stockpile, resist de-alerting initiatives which could increase strategic uncertainty in a crisis, and ensure that the U.S. retains a robust and balanced triad of strategic nuclear forces.

I want the record to reflect that I have been concerned by some of this nominee's statements regarding arms control. As my colleagues are aware, Mr. Rumsfeld suggested during his confirmation hearing that the ABM Treaty is an outdated relic of the cold war, and has discussed abandoning the process of arms control and sizing our strategic forces unilaterally. I urge Mr. Rumsfeld to reconsider these views. No arms accord is perfect, but over the past several decades the arms control process has produced momentum toward more inspections, transparency, reciprocity, and confidence-building between former cold war rivals.

This momentum toward greater stability and trust was hard-won and

should not be abandoned. One need look no farther than Russia's failure to fully implement the 1991 Bush-Gorbachev handshake agreement on tactical nuclear reductions to see the folly of unilateralism in arms control. In the view of this Senator, any further strategic force reductions would best be undertaken in the context of a new START accord, one built upon recognition that the ABM Treaty is the cornerstone of strategic stability and can allow the limited, effective, affordable national missile defense we need to counter emerging rogue-state threats.

Finally, I look forward to talking with the new Defense Secretary about the importance of Defense Department compliance with statutes directing that the entire B-52H bomber force be funded. Billions of dollars of upgrades and the world's most advanced precision weapons have transformed these airframes into airborne arsenals which today represent the fast, sharp end of the spear in our conventional deterrent force.

Mr. President, Donald Rumsfeld has an impressive record. He is qualified to be Secretary of Defense. I congratulate him on his confirmation and wish him the very best.

NOMINATION OF COLIN L. POWELL

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am honored to have supported the nomination of Colin Powell to be our next Secretary of State. Few individuals submitted to the Senate for confirmation have the credentials, experience, values, and respect of the Nation that Colin Powell has.

Colin Powell has served our Nation with distinction in both civilian and military capacities. Powell served the Carter Administration as an executive assistant in both the Energy and Defense Departments. During the Reagan Administration, Powell was chosen as a senior adviser to Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, and later held his first Cabinet post as National Security Advisor to President Reagan. During the Bush Administration, Colin Powell was nominated to serve as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Most Americans, however, remember Colin Powell's role as the architect of Operation Desert Storm, and his unique skills in developing critical global alliances to defeat the Iraqis forces in 1991.

Colin Powell, however, represents more than a distinguished military leader. His life and those values that he has encouraged our young citizens to follow, are an inspiration to us all. During the decade since Operation Desert Storm, I have admired Colin Powell's efforts to reach out to America's youth, encouraging our younger citizens to continue their education, and to aspire to higher goals in life. For Powell, the challenge was to make sure that every child in America understands that he or she is important, and that we, as leaders and parents, are

going to make certain that every one of them achieves success in life. To achieve this goal, Colin Powell urged Americans to step forward as mentors for our youth, and to make certain that young people have access to computers and the Internet. In my opinion, no challenge, and no effort is more important than the education of our youth.

Few individuals that have served in this capacity have faced the extraordinary challenges and threats around the world. Relations with China, Russia, the Balkans and the Middle East, as well as the continued nuclear threat and terrorism will demand his immediate attention and skills. I am confident of his abilities to handle these challenges, and I am honored to work with Secretary of State Powell on these most difficult issues.

Not long ago, Colin Powell was asked during an interview on Scholastic.com "what do you believe history will say about you?" His response: "my only request of history is that history books say that I was a good soldier and served the nation well." Mr. President, Colin Powell has already achieved that goal. I am confident of his continued outstanding service to our Nation during the next four years, and perhaps most importantly, as a wonderful example to the youth of America.

NOMINATION OF DONALD EVANS

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I supported the nomination of Donald Evans to be Secretary of Commerce. Don Evans has a distinguished background in private business as head of a large, independent energy firm. In addition, his experience as chairman of the Bush campaign and as Chairman of the Board of Regents of the University of Texas system have helped prepare him for overseeing the wide-ranging programs of the Department of Commerce.

As Secretary, Don Evans' first mission will be to promote U.S. exports. With a record trade deficit of more than \$300 billion last year, I can think of few tasks more urgent than this one. As he takes on this responsibility, I urge him to remember the critical role that small businesses and agriculture play in our export successes and not concentrate solely on the role of the largest corporations. We also cannot forget the other side of the ledger. Mr. Evans will also be charged with enforcing our trade laws, another vital task to ensure that U.S. farmers and businesses are not competing against unfair imports.

I am also very concerned about the so-called digital divide in the development of the communications infrastructure and the new e-economy. As Senator for one of the most rural states in the nation, it is critically important to me that our next Secretary aggressively work to close this digital divide to make sure rural North Dakotans get full access to the benefits of information technology.

Finally, I would note that the Department of Commerce is responsible for collecting a range of statistics on our population and economy that are critical to informing the choices that we, as elected officials must make. The accuracy and accessibility of this data are essential to making the right choices for America's future.

In short, Don Evans faces a host of challenges. I am confident that he will approach them with the same vigor and success with which he ran the Bush campaign, and I look forward to working with him in the months and years ahead.

NOMINATION OF ANN VENEMAN

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I look forward to working with Ann Veneman as Secretary of Agriculture. For North Dakota, there is no Cabinet position more important than this one.

American agriculture faces a serious crisis that threatens the economic livelihood of North Dakota farmers and rural communities. Our next Secretary of Agriculture faces the challenge and responsibility of coming up with a new farm policy that addresses this crisis as well as the competitive challenges we face from overseas. Ms. Veneman has a long record on agricultural issues and will bring a depth of experience and commitment to the leadership of the Department of Agriculture.

However, I must say her track record causes me some concern. Ms. Veneman was a cheerleader for the failed Freedom to Farm policy that has been such a disaster for North Dakota farmers. In fact, we've had to write economic disaster bills in each of the last three years to deal with the consequences of that disastrous legislation. Beyond that, Ms. Veneman was heavily involved in negotiating the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, which was another disaster for North Dakota. Nevertheless, I wish her well, and I'll do everything I can to work with her to change these policies.

I think the first priority must be to rewrite the current federal farm policy. This is not working and it's very clear to everyone that it's not working. Prices are at record lows. Farmers are leaving the land. And rural main street businesses are suffering.

Next, we must re-invigorate our agricultural trade policy. We've got to be engaged in world trade but it's got to be on a fair, competitive basis. I think we've got to level the playing field with our major competitors—the Europeans—who are outpacing us 10 to one in terms of providing support for their producers. Leveling the playing field is one of my highest priorities, so we get farm income up and so our farmers have a fair chance to succeed.

As a senior member of the Agriculture Committee, I look forward to working with Ms. Veneman as we take on these challenges.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

THE PASSING OF JOHN C. "JACK" RENNIE

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I speak today to pay tribute to the life of one of Massachusetts most prominent citizens and small business advocates, John C. "Jack" Rennie, who passed away last Monday, January 15th, at the age of 63. Jack was truly an extraordinary figure who changed the way American business looked at education, and the way education worked in Massachusetts.

Born in Boston in May of 1937, Jack attended and graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy and Harvard School of Business. He later went on to earn a master's degree from Northeastern University.

Using the skills he learned while serving in the Navy as a test pilot, and putting his business education and experience to good use, he founded Pacer Systems in 1968. Pacer Systems provided systems integration and product services for the Department of Defense (DoD). Pacer was later to become AverStar and expand its systems integration work beyond DoD to other Federal agencies. Jack served as Vice Chairman of AverStar from 1998 until his retirement in June of last year.

His entrepreneurial spirit was not limited to his own company. In the mid-1970s, Jack was the driving force behind the creation of National Small Business United (NSBU), the nation's oldest bipartisan trade association for small businesses. In the early 1980s, Jack served as the President of the Small Business Association of New England (SBANE), and in 1983, he led the first all small business trade mission to the People's Republic of China. In 1983, he was also named the Small Business Person of the Year for Massachusetts and New England by then President Ronald Reagan.

But despite all of these noteworthy accomplishments, Jack's most lasting achievements came in the area of education reform.

As a business leader and entrepreneur, Jack was alarmed at the problems facing the public education system in Massachusetts and the nation. He knew that the businesses of tomorrow would demand a higher caliber of education from its employees, and that education was an integral part of America's future prosperity.

Not one to sit on the sidelines, Jack combined his business expertise with his natural leadership abilities to found the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education in 1988, which successfully led a five-year effort to reform Massachusetts' K-12 education system. His organization's 1991 report, "Every Child a Winner," was the impetus for the Massachusetts Education and Reform Act in 1993. This legisla-

tion led to new state-wide testing and accountability standards, as well as increased funding for education.

Prominent small businessman, and executive, Navy veteran, education reformer and community leader, Jack Rennie's passing leaves a void few people are qualified to fill, and even fewer would attempt to try. On behalf of the citizens of Massachusetts, I would like to express our sincere condolences to Jack's family and friends. ●

RECOGNIZING FRANK HEMINGWAY

• Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, recently Frank Hemingway came to Washington, D.C. to be a part of the 2001 Inaugural activities. A student from Onate High School in Las Cruces, New Mexico, he was the winner of the Character Counts Task Force Contest for area high school students. To win this contest, Mr. Hemingway was required to write an essay dealing with his experience with one of the Pillars of Character Counts.

Character Counts is a grassroots effort in New Mexico and on the national front. The Character Counts initiative strives to promote, in all aspects of American life, six basic pillars of good character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. I have actively worked to support New Mexico schools and communities that have embraced this initiative.

Mr. Hemingway chose to write his on the Responsibility Pillar, and how being responsible has changed his life. I commend Frank for his smart choices and hard work.

Mr. President, I ask that his essay be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

The material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.

HOW RESPONSIBILITY CHANGED MY LIFE

(By Frank Hemingway)

"Hey bud! want to go to the movies tonight? I've got some girls from across town going—I know I can get you a date."

"No, maybe later," I answered to a typical offer from one of my closest friends, "It's a school night and I've got a report that I need to do before the big meet this weekend," I replied.

Being responsible isn't always easy, but anything that's worth while rarely is. However, I know from experience that responsibility pays off.

Responsibility is an active character trait—it is something that must be demonstrated rather than just an attribute that a person possesses. Being responsible means putting impulsive actions on hold and making good decisions based on sound judgment while keeping one's long term goals in mind and acting accordingly. Following this approach to responsibility has helped me maintain outstanding grades and become an emerging leader to my team and classmates. Everyone can and should be responsible to a certain degree and accountable for their actions. A responsible person is dependable, reliable, and trustworthy. Living with these

traits has opened up numerous possibilities for me and helped me to further mature and become even more responsible.

As a captain of my cross country team, I am responsible for my teammates to a certain extent although they are still responsible for themselves and we are all held accountable by our coach. For example, I am responsible for locking up the locker room and making sure that everyone knows about all practice times. I must be dependable and reliable to fulfill these duties and trustworthy so as not to abuse my authority. These actions, in turn, allow me to set a good example and be looked up to by my teammates as a positive role model. I have become confident in myself as a result of being responsible and have become able to handle additional responsibilities.

I have increased my responsibility in my community resulting from my experiences in a team setting. I am often asked by my neighbors to take care of their houses and pets while they are on vacation. I have done this for time periods of up to five weeks! Doing this task takes discipline and self control in making sure that the necessary duties are completed without fail and whether or not I am in the mood for the job.

Successful instances of responsibility within my community have led me to seek responsibility to my country. Having recently turned eighteen years old, I upheld my national responsibility to register with the Selective Service System and was eager in becoming a registered voter. I have learned that the significance of responsibility is that it grows proportionally in that small responsibilities soon lead to larger responsibilities, which is an essential part of growing up. The circumstances in life are always changing, responsibility is always a good choice and responsibility has continually changed my life for the better. ●

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time and placed on the calendar:

S. 73. A bill to prohibit the provision of Federal funds to any State or local educational agency that denies or prevents participation in constitutional prayer in schools; read the first time.

S. 74. A bill to prohibit the provision of Federal funds to any State or local educational agency that distributes or provides morning-after pills to schoolchildren; read the first time.

S. 75. A bill to protect the lives of unborn human beings; read the first time.

S. 76. A bill to make it a violation of a right secured by the Constitution and laws of the United States to perform an abortion with the knowledge that the abortion is being performed solely because of the gender of the fetus; read the first time.

S. 78. A bill to amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to make preferential treatment an unlawful employment practice, and for other purposes; read the first time.

S. 79. A bill to encourage drug-free and safe schools; read the first time.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated: